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ABSTRACT

Operation Calculus is a program designed to close the achievement gap in honors mathematics courses between African-American students and Caucasian students at Eisenhower High School. In Decatur Public School (DPS) District 61, there is a significant academic achievement disparity between African American and Caucasian students in many subject areas, most noticeably in mathematics. To address this issue, Operation Calculus provides a four-week summer instructional session to pre-teach students the math class in which they are enrolled for the upcoming academic school year. Students receive instruction in the following courses: Honors Algebra II, Pre-Calculus, and AP Calculus. In addition to summer instructional sessions, Operation Calculus provides students with continuous instruction throughout the school year, individualized tutoring, and specialized ACT prep instruction. Lastly, the program’s effectiveness can be linked to the student-teacher relationship building practices, which creates a positive impact on the current outlook of the possibility of attending an institute of higher learning.

INTRODUCTION

Operation Calculus was established July 1st 2013. Mrs. Laura Anderson and Mrs. Amy Zahm, assistant principals at Eisenhower High School, established the program. Before the pilot program was initiated, students were given a survey in which many answers indicated that honors math courses proved most difficult. Previous data revealed a large number of African-American students dropping out of honors math courses; also a large number of African-American students failing such courses. The program was devised around the concept of pre-teaching students their honors math course over the summer before the academic school year began. The conclusion was drawn that due to the pre-exposure of the course material, students will have a greater understanding of the material, which will foster a better academic performance.

After the surveys were reviewed, prospective students were identified and invited to take part in the program. The summer instructional sessions were divided into two cohorts: Honors Algebra II and Pre-Calculus. Students were to meet five days a week for three hours a day. In total, 22 students participated in the program. The most important aspect about the program’s participation is that all of the students are volunteers. Each student committed to the instructional schedule without receiving academic credit. This type of student commitment is necessary to achieve the
desired results in such programs designed to improve academic performance. The correlation between student achievement and relationship building has been well documented. In this age of high stakes testing and accountability for both students and teachers, it is important to examine the evidence to determine if these relationships are indeed a factor in raising student achievement. Advocates for the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act assert that the way to improve student achievement is to focus on test scores. However, learning is a process that involves cognitive and social psychological dimensions, and both processes should be considered if academic achievement is to be maximized (Hallinan, 2008). Regardless of a teacher-student relationship is close or fraught with conflict, that relationship seems to both contribute to, and be an indicator of, a child’s adjustment to school and academic success (Pianta & Stuhlman, 2004).

A program such as Operation Calculus can provide the necessary resources that could potentially make the difference in students attending college. Operation Calculus provides students with instruction, tutoring, academic support, and positive reinforcement that will help them gain confidence in their own academic capabilities. As our society and workforce evolves and becomes more technologically advanced, those who possess strong mathematical skills are becoming a high commodity among STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) businesses, an infrastructure where minorities are highly underrepresented.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Algebra Project, founded by Dr. Robert P Moses, is a national organization committed to developing mathematical literacy as a tool for civic and economic inclusion for inner-city and low-income students. Drawing on almost 30 years of experience working with low-performing students in schools with high minority populations, the Algebra Project is designed to address student success in mathematics. Despite improvements in academic performance in certain areas, it appears advanced math classes are one of the most segregated places on college and university campuses in the United States (Walker 2007).

Contrary to persistent myth, it is not a discernible conclusion that minority students lack interest in math, or do not have high educational aspirations (Walker 2007). In fact, several studies document that minority students sometimes have more positive attitudes toward mathematics and higher educational aspirations than their Caucasian counterparts, especially in early years of secondary education (Goldsmith, 2004; Strutchens & Silver, 2000). Yet, students from these minority groups are less likely than Asian American and Caucasian students to complete advanced mathematics classes (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004; Teitelbaum 2003). Although schools have achieved greater parity for some college-prep courses – algebra and geometry, for example – there are still ethnicity gaps in enrollments in courses like trigonometry and calculus. These gaps have profound implications on student achievement (Teitelbaum, 2003). Despite the curricular reforms of the 1980’s, the “algebra for all” movements of the 1990’s, and the advent of No Child Left Behind in the 2000’s, there is still great variability in opportunities to learn higher mathematics in schools across the United States. Students attending predominantly minority schools still receive fewer opportunities to learn rigorous mathematics (Darling-Hammond, 2004; Tate, 1997).

Brookline High School in Brookline, MA created a similar program entitled African-American Scholars, designed to address the academic performance of minority students. A subsidiary program within African American Scholars entitled the Calculus Project was designed to increase
scolastic performance, specifically in math. The key component of the Calculus Project is to pre-teach students math courses before they entered the academic year. Operation Calculus adopted this method, however, other practices were developed during the pilot year to provide the program with a level of authenticity.

The effectiveness of programs designed to raise academic achievement is dependent on the ability of students and teachers to build positive relationships. Adults often assume that children like school due to the opportunities it offers for peer interaction. Although previous studies support that notion, research also indicates that certain teacher traits serve as strong indicators of students’ like or dislike for school (Montalvo, Mansfield, & Miller, 2007). Research by Montalvo et al. (2007) has shown that students will put forth greater effort and demonstrate a higher degree of persistence if they like their teachers. In addition, findings indicate that students attain better grades in classes taught by teachers they like (Montalvo et al., 2007). The evidence linking student-teacher relationships with student achievement has been consistent across grade levels. Given these findings, it is important for all students and teachers to have equal access to establishing positive relationships with their teachers.

METHODOLDY

The most common question asked about Operation Calculus is why does it only target African-American students? This decision was based on the performance data of the student body. All data indicated that there is a large disparity in the academic performance between African-American and Caucasian students. For example, if the data showed that female students displayed a low academic performance in mathematics, the program would target females.

Operation Calculus was developed around a similar project designed by Brookline High School. Academic evaluation of the student body revealed similar data with poor mathematical performances amongst minority students. The program Brookline High School instituted focused on pre-teaching math courses to students. Operation Calculus decided to take its efforts a few steps further by continuing its pre-teaching throughout the school year, along with an intensive tutoring schedule, and specialized ACT prep courses under the direction of the Huntington Learning Institute.

In the process of constructing the curriculum of Operation Calculus, a list of goals was formulated to measure its success. After devising the program, the main goals were as follows: to show improvement in analytical math skills during the pre-teaching instructional sessions during the summer, increase the retention rate for African-American students enrolled in honors math courses, decrease the number of African-American student failures in honors math courses, increase the number of African-American students to meet/exceed the state standards of the PSAE/ACT exams, increase the number of African-American students taking Advanced Placement Calculus, and increase the number of African American students eligible to be inducted into the National Honor Society. During the pilot year, Operation Calculus has successfully met and exceeded the goals outlined in its initial proposal. Eisenhower High School is currently awaiting the results of the PSAE/ACT exams.

In order to truly enhance a student’s academic experience, he or she must be challenged. Without the daily challenge and constant stimulation, students become lackadaisical about the progress of
their education. Operation Calculus provides students the opportunity to take Advanced Placement Calculus in their senior year, which can prove to be the most challenging class in any high school curriculum. In addition, Operation Calculus can also provide students with the necessary preparation and means of self-confidence to successfully complete AP Calculus. Given the early success of the program’s pilot year, others within the student body recognize the commitment to education that members of Operation Calculus continue to display. As other students work with members of Operation Calculus, the improved positive attitude towards education becomes infectious, therefore, improving the overall academic performance of the student body, and increasing the number of college-bound students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the organization and initiation of Operation Calculus, African-American and disadvantaged students were invited to take part in the program. Over the past 10 years, Eisenhower High School has seen a significant academic achievement disparity between African-American and Caucasian students. This gap is the widest in mathematics. 2012-13 course enrollment data reflects that 49 African-American students dropped an honors math class, 42 failed during the first semester, and 21 during second semester. In 2013, 9% of African-American students met or exceeded state requirements on the Prairie State Achievement Exam. These statistics are dramatically worse than those of Caucasian classmates.

During the summer pre-teaching instructional sessions, students were given a pre-test on the first day and a post-test on the last day. This was done to measure the growth of retained knowledge over the course of the instructional sessions. Divided into two cohorts, the Algebra II cohort on average improved 18% on the post-examination. The Pre-Calculus cohort on average improved 22.8%. Every student member of the Operation Calculus program showed improvement from the pre-test to the post-test.

In the methodology section are the outlined goals of the Operation Calculus program. After the first semester of the 2013-14 school year, Operation Calculus is on pace to meet and exceed every goal.

1. GOAL: Less than 29% of African-American Students will fail 1st semester honors math course.
   RESULT: 9% of African-American students failed their honors math course.

2. GOAL: Less than 15% of Operation Calculus students will fail 1st semester honors math course.
   RESULT: 0% of Operation Calculus students failed their honors math course.

3. GOAL: Less than 39% of African-American students will drop 2013-14 honors math course.
   RESULT: 7% of African-American students dropped an honors math course.

4. GOAL: Less than 15% of Operation Calculus students will drop 2013-14 honors math course.
   RESULT: 0% of Operation Calculus students dropped an honors math course. *NOTE:
four Operation Calculus students are taking two honors math courses to put them on track to take Advanced Placement Calculus during their senior year.

5. GOAL: Increase the number of African-American students taking advanced math courses (Pre-Calculus and Advanced Placement Calculus).

RESULTS: Pre Calculus Enrollment:

2012-13 – 15 African-American Students
2013-14 – 12 African-American Students
2014-15 – 19 African American Students scheduled

AP Calculus Enrollment:

2012-13 – 2 African American Students
2013-14 – 4 African American Students
2014-15 – 9 African-American Students scheduled

CONCLUSION

In accordance with DPS district, this program will improve the culture amongst its students, during and outside of school. It will also create a climate that fosters achievement through small group discussions that are centered on topics such as: STEM careers, education, college, and society. Through the Operation Calculus program the community will be improved. The program will support, promote, celebrate, and foster an environment of high achievement and expectations. When students have a positive teacher-student relationship, they adjust to school more easily, view school as a positive experience, exhibit fewer behavior difficulties, display better social skills, and demonstrate higher academic achievement (Buyse et al., 2009). They are also more active participants in class, express a greater interest in college, and maintain higher grade point averages (Hallinan, 2008). Students will have the drive to stay in school and achieve to their highest potential because of the ongoing support from peers and staff members. Furthermore, high achieving students are better prepared to be successful in post-secondary education, and will become more active and productive citizens in the community.
References


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Exploring Community College Institutional Effectiveness Literature

Authors: Clevette M. RIdguard, Ed. D., Montgomery College
Calvin B. Ball, Ed. D., Baltimore City Community College

Community colleges are considered “the most successful institution in the twentieth century in American higher education” (Cain, 1999, p. 313). They provide upward mobility and educational opportunities to the masses (Pollard, 2011). Nearly half of the nation’s students begin their higher education at one of the nation’s almost 1,200 community colleges (AACC, 2013; Nunley, Bers, & Manning, 2011). According to Gumport (2003) and Bailey and Morest (2004), community colleges are dynamic institutions with a comprehensive, multi-faceted mission that serve a broad range of educational, social, and economic functions to meet student and community needs:

1. Academic transfer preparation
2. Vocational, technical, contract, and workforce development education
3. General education and developmental education
4. Continuing education, lifelong learning, and non-credit courses.

American community colleges award close to 1 million degrees and certificates and span all 50 states in the nation (AACC, 2013, p. 4). More than 60% of the students are enrolled part time, and many serve other roles, such as, employee, parent, spouse, and/or caretaker (Nunley et al., 2011). Community colleges are diverse in their student populations with ethnic representation among African American (49%), Hispanic (56%), Asian/Pacific Islander (44%), and Native American (42%) populations. More than 40% are first-generation students—meaning they are the first one in their families to attend college (AACC, 2013, p. 4). Because community colleges offer an array of services, these institutions are constantly subject to myriad demands and performance expectations (Eaton, 2007). However, there are a limited number of common measurements that can prove the quality and value of community colleges, considering the variety of distinct college missions and their students’ diverse educational goals (Kramer & Swing, 2010).

THE COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

There is juxtaposition between the traditional open-access policy of community colleges and the expectation for increased student success, graduation, and completion. Many students arrive at community colleges unprepared for academic rigor and have to take developmental, or remedial, courses. It can be challenging for these students to complete their programs or transfer within the given national performance timelines and benchmarks (Nunley et al., 2011). Similarly, public two-year institutions are challenged by demands state and local funding sources placed on them to operate with decreased budgets, calls for greater accountability, growth in technology and online learning, and competition from for-profit institutions (Boggs, 2011; Ewell, 2009; Kezar & Eckel,
Historically, evaluating the quality of higher education focused on measurable characteristics such as fiscal soundness, faculty credentials, library holdings, and curricular consistency (CRAC, 2003). Currently, the shift to student learning outcomes, student completion and achievement, and other performance measures has presented a distinct challenge for community college leadership. Leaders strive to create and promote measures that fully exhibit their institutional and student success. These performance measures are collected as part of the institutional effectiveness process that the president is expected to lead (AACC, 2011).

**INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Institutional effectiveness is an important framework used to determine educational quality at higher education institutions (Head, 2011). The components of institutional effectiveness include student learning outcomes assessment, program review, general education review, evaluation of educational support and administrative services, strategic planning, performance benchmarking, quality measurements, accreditation functions, and institutional research (Welsh, Petrosko, & Metcalf, 2003). The term *institutional effectiveness* originated from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accrediting region. SACS (2012) defined institutional effectiveness as a “systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against mission on all aspects of institutions” (SACS, p. 9). SACS measures institutional educational quality against its processes and its ability to achieve its mission and goals. According to SACS, “The institution identifies expected outcomes, assess(es) the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvements based on analysis of the results” (p. 27).

**COMPONENTS OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Institutional effectiveness is cyclical process in that an institution (a) starts with a defined purpose; (b) identifies goals, objectives, and outcomes; (c) performs assessments and evaluations; and (d) uses the results for improvements (Manning, 2011). Institutional effectiveness processes help the institution continually improve procedures and policies to align them with its mission and goals. The literature and all regional accreditation guidelines present certain common *assessment tasks* and core components of any assessment activity that measures institutional effectiveness: (a) planning for the institutional effectiveness process, (b) identifying goals, (c) assessing those goals, and (d) using the results to generate institutional improvements (Banta, Black, Kahn, & Jackson, 2004; Ewell, 2009; Maki, 2010; SCAS, 2012, Suskie, 2009). These assessment indicators apply when measuring institutional effectiveness as a unit or any of its components, such as student learning outcomes, strategic planning and budget allocations, program review, and student services assessment.

The New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability (2010), which is endorsed by 27 higher education associations, published *Guidelines for Assessment and Accountability in Higher Education*. These guidelines highlight the universal aspects of assessment tasks: (a) set goals, (b) gather evidence, (c) use evidence for improvements, and (d) report evidence and results. While institutions may label these tasks differently and delineate them with numerous sub-tasks, the four tasks mentioned are common for implementing or assessing any institutional effectiveness process. Table 1 outlines specific details and relevant questions within the core assessment tasks of institutional effectiveness.
### Table 1:

**Major Tasks Used in Institutional Effectiveness Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Tasks</th>
<th>Sub-Tasks Addressed in Question Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Planning for the Assessment</td>
<td>What are the established timelines and parameters of the process? Who will be involved and at what level? How is the process linked to the institution’s mission and goals? How are common terminology and language established and communicated? What are the duties and responsibilities of those involved? What resources are needed? How do committees and sub-committees for institutional effectiveness function, integrate processes, inform the college community about activities, and gather input? How are all the voices at the institution heard? What about a budget for the process? How do these processes relate to institutional budget and resource allocations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Identifying the Outcomes</td>
<td>What does the institution want to assess and at what level (institutional, program, course, student services, library, etc.)? What are the processes for each assessment, and how are they different? Is there assessment overlap? What outcomes are to be assessed? What data sets exist to conduct the assessment, and what data sets are needed? Are there standard performance measures mandates that must be considered?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Assessing the Outcomes</td>
<td>What are the assessment instruments? What are the tools, forms, etc. that will be used to conduct the assessment? What are the workflows and timelines to conduct assessment? What are the expectations of those involved in the assessment?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Providing Evidence for Improvements</td>
<td>How are assessment results used to make changes and/or modifications to the institution demonstrating improvements in measurable terms? What was learned, and/or what was changed or enhanced as a result of assessment activities? What is the timeline for change? What is the feedback process? As a result of the assessment, how are anticipated improvements communicated to the internal and external community? How are improvements monitored?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Adapted from Banta, et al., 2004; Banta, Jones & Black, 2009; Bresciani, 2006; Ewell, 2009; Hoey, 1995; Kramer & Swing, 2010; Maki, 2010; Nichols & Nichols, 2005; SACS, 2012; Suskie, 2009; Volkwein, 2009; Walvoord, 2010.*
INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders, both external and internal to the institution, are monitoring community colleges and holding them to standards of educational excellence and quality (Volkwein, 2009). For example, externally, the public is asking for data-informed decision-making and proof of student learning and success using qualitative and quantitative data. Various segments of the public question the return on investment of higher education (Dodd, 2004; Ewell, 2009). Policymakers are interested in “high performance and achieving better student retention and graduation rates; employers are interested in the development of programs that meet workforce needs; and students want conveniences, value, and quality” (Alfred, Ewell, Hudgins, & McClenny, 1999, p. i). Governments at all levels want to know if funds are being spent wisely, and some states are mandating performance metrics. In addition, regional accreditation agencies have shifted from requiring evidence of assessment processes to requesting assessment results that demonstrate institutional improvements.

Internally, colleges have had to institute assessment processes and demonstrate results that will answer the call for accountability and assessment at the student, course, program, and institutional level (Ewell, 2009). Teaching and learning and their impact on students’ needs are to be assessed in meaningful ways to generate improvements for student success. Demonstrated, measurable outcomes are necessary to document that students are learning and are prepared for the workforce. Assessing these student learning outcomes is centered on key competencies and skills. Critical thinking, information literacy, oral and written communication, and collaboration are among the needed competencies for an educated citizenry to function effectively in the workplace and in communities (Friedman & Mandelbaum, 2011). To fully understand the details of institutional effectiveness, a review of assessment, accountability, and accreditation is essential.

ASSESSMENT

According to Suskie (2009), academic assessment is the “systematic collection, review, and use of information and data about educational programs for the purpose of improving student learning and development” (p. 4). The outcomes of academic assessment activities document what students are learning and whether students are learning. Community college assessment of student learning outcomes measures student progress at the program and general education competency levels. Student learning outcomes assessment enables institutions to know “how their specific curricula practices and programs make a difference in their students’ cognitive and affective development” (SACS, 2012, p. 42).

Assessment is essential for improving the quality of educational offerings and demonstrating that students are prepared academically for the next phase of their lives, be it to transfer to a four-year institution, to secure employment, to earn a certificate demonstrating mastery of a particular skill set, or to graduate (Bailey & Morest, 2004). Assessing student learning ideally is embedded in ongoing course instruction. The process is a continuous one aimed at intertwining teaching and learning so students can be assessed, evaluated, retaught (if necessary), and reassessed until they reach acceptable level of competencies.
Funded by the League of Innovation in the Community College (The League) and the Pew Charitable Trust, the 21st Century Learning Outcomes Project was to develop “a set of cross-curricular, core competencies that two-year college graduates should have to succeed in work and to transfer to a four-year school” (Miles & Wilson, 2004, p. 89). These competencies, according to Miles and Wilson (2004):

1. Communication skills (oral and written)
2. Computation skills (math and scientific reasoning)
3. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills
4. Interpersonal and personal skills (teamwork, conflict resolution, wellness, and aesthetics)
5. Technology skills (information literacy).

The culture of assessment has become engrained in all activities of the academy, from student services, shared governance processes, board relations, and strategic plans. Institutions are preoccupied with assessing if processes are working. A recent example of this is the Principle of Effective Assessment of Student Achievement statement draft released in July 2013 and endorsed by all regional accrediting agencies and six major educational associations (AACCJC, 2013). The statement highlights that:

The challenges for community colleges are to develop the capacity to discuss what the results of learning assessment mean, to identify ways of improving student learning, and to make institutional commitments to that improvement by planning, allocating necessary resources, and implementing strategies for improvements (Beno, 2004, p. 67).

Not only is this challenging with student learning outcomes, using results also entails institutional assessment of administrative functions and student services. Assessment activities apply across all institutional programs, processes, activities, and committees. Of equal challenge is documenting assessment results for institutional improvements and for comparison among institutions. Assessment and accountability complement each other. Assessment is the internal mode of the core process of continuous inquiry and improvement. Accountability, along with accreditation, is the external mechanism for documenting assessment activities for transparency of institutional effectiveness (Maki, 2010).

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability was significantly impacted by former U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings’ Commission on the Future of Higher Education (Basken, 2007), often referred to as the Spellings Commission Report. Declaring that critical review of higher education in the United States had been neglected for too long, the report focused on several key areas of concern: access, affordability, quality, and accountability. This report was meant to address issues familiar to academics and include the interests of business and industry (Eddy, 2010).
Several other policy reports contributed to the demand for accountability. In 2000, the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education published its first *Measuring Up* report on the educational performance of individual states. This report is updated bi-annually and includes international data. The *Measuring Up* reports highlight the deficits and achievements of higher education in the United States and emphasize education as a public commodity that needs to be monitored as a matter of public policy (Ewell & Jones, 2006). McClenney (2004) agreed, “Accountability is not just inevitable, it is a good thing, because community colleges are public institutions; they have an obligation to publicly report results” (p. 5). Another aspect to the accountability agenda was promoted by the Business-Higher Education Forum, sponsored by the American Council on Education. This report, *Public Accountability for Student Learning in Higher Education*, urged colleges and universities to engage in student learning and assessment and to publish their results for public review. Business leaders note that employers want new hires to have certain competencies and skills evident in students’ learning and educational results (Ewell & Jones, 2006).

The emphasis on gathering student learning data using uniform, systematic methods was the focus of a 2005 report from the National Commission on Accountability for the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO). This publication endorsed a proposal from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to create a national student record system that publishes reviews from accrediting agencies. The report also discusses the format and frequency for conveying student learning outcomes data to the federal government (Phillipe, 2011).

Over the past decade, the requirements for accountability have grown beyond simple assessment reporting for state and local legislatures. Performance reporting, metrics, and indicators are required in some states and are used to compare peer institutions given a set of common benchmarks. Burke and Minassians (2004) conducted a higher education performance indicator study in 29 states, which revealed a disregard for the uniqueness of community colleges and their diverse clientele. Community college leaders realize performance indicators are the new accountability measures that are linked to increase funding, therefore echoing a greater need for accountability. Because there is a lack of comparative data for policymakers and government officials, additional forms of national benchmarking are on the horizon (Burke & Minassians, 2004).

Historically, one of the primary measures of performance benchmarking has been student graduation rates. The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) is a system of interrelated surveys collected by the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Every college, university, and technical and vocational institution that receives federal student financial aid is required to report data on enrollments, program completions, graduation rates, faculty and staff, finances, institutional prices, and student financial aid (IPEDS, n.d.). Graduation rates that are reported to IPEDS are the only consistent measure for a national sample of community colleges’ performance (Bailey & Xu, 2012). The definition of a graduation rate is the first-time, full-time student who earns a degree or certificate at the institution within 150% of the expected completion time for the program in which he or she is enrolled (NCES, 2013). This definition of graduation rate favors the traditional student who attends full-time and who mostly likely attends a four-year college.
However, it does not provide an accurate picture of community college students. Usually graduation rates in community colleges are low, averaging in the 20%-to-30% range of student completion (Bailey & Xu, 2012). Nevertheless, these rates should be evaluated in context and do not reflect the non-traditional students who make up the largest population of community college students. Students who attend community colleges are typically part-time, working, adult students with the responsibility of caring for children or adult parents. Therefore, using the IPEDS graduation rates excludes a large portion of the community college student population.

The Completion Agenda (2013) calls for a national increase in graduation rates to 55% percent by 2025. The Completion Agenda impacts accountability by requiring institutions to collect data unique and specific to community colleges. These data include graduation rates for part-time and transfer students, critical milestones of student progress, and credit accumulation data. Aided by Complete College America and the National Governors Association, states are asked to commit to college completion by setting state completion goals, developing action plans, and collecting common measures of student progress (Complete College America, n.d.). Assessment, accountability, and pressures from accrediting agencies indicate that the era of monitoring effectiveness and transparency in higher education is here to stay.

ACCREDITATION

The third component of institutional effectiveness is accreditation. In the United States, accreditation began in the 19th century to prevent external control over educational standards (Dodd, 2004). Accreditation is the “voluntary, collegial process of self-review and peer review for improvement of academic quality and public accountability of institutions and programs” (CHEA, 2012). It is the primary means of quality assurance and institutional effectiveness improvements in higher education in the United States (Beno, 2004; Combs, 2001). At the completion of each review, the accrediting agency renders a decision or judgment to accredit, accredit with conditions, or not accredit (Ball, 2008). This quality review process occurs on a periodic basis, usually every 10 years. Four primary benefits of accreditation have been recognized: (a) quality assurance, (b) access to federal and state funding, (c) acceptance of credentials in the workplace, and (d) transfer of credits (Eaton, 2009).

Types of accreditations. Four types of accreditations exist in the United States: (a) regional accrediting bodies that operate within a specific geographic area and accredit public and private, mainly non-profit and degree-granting, two-and four-year institutions; (b) programmatic, specialized accreditations that review particular programs, and professional and freestanding schools, such as law, medicine, and engineering; (c) national faith-related accreditations that accredit religiously affiliated institutions, both non-profit and degree-granting; and (d) national career-related accreditations that accredit for-profit, career-based, single-purpose institutions, both degree and non-degree (Eaton, 2009).

The Department of Education, along with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) (2012), recognizes six regional accrediting agencies:

1. Middle States Commission of Higher Education (MSCHE)
2. North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCACS)
3. New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)
4. Northwest Commission of Colleges and Universities (NCCU)
5. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission (SACS)
6. Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).
   a. Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (WASC-ACCJC).
   b. Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities (WASC-ACSCU).

However, as of January 2012, NCCU is no longer accredited by CHEA (2012). All six regional
accreditation agencies have some expectations for student learning outcomes, assessment, and
institutional effectiveness (Head, 2011; Manning, 2011). All regional accreditors expect learning
outcomes to be defined, articulated, assessed, and documented proof that assessment results guide
institutional improvements (Head, 2011). Rather than being prescriptive, most accreditation
regions provide guidelines. Accrediting agencies not only expect that assessment processes are in
place, but they also are looking for evidence of overall institutional improvements in teaching and
learning practices that benefit students.

Regional accreditation agencies play a prominent role in driving assessment and institutional
effectiveness agendas by setting standards for both in their evaluation requirements. All regional
accrediting agencies require community colleges to demonstrate compliance with institutional
effectiveness standards. Complying with accreditation standards provides an assurance that
institutional effectiveness in higher education will not vanish (Beno, 2004; Head, 2011; Maki,
2010). Accreditation is a four-step process: (a) institutional self-assessment, (b) review team visit
and written report, (c) institutional response, and (d) accreditation agency action.

Accreditors have sustained the need for better institutional assessment plans and results that
promote higher quality education. The higher education accreditation process tries vigorously to
stay ahead of imposing regulations from the federal government (Eaton, 2011). Three examples
are noteworthy. First, the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC) (2003)
established the principles of good practices outlining what a regional accrediting agency should
expect from one of its institutions as it relates to student learning. Second, the Council of Higher
Education Association (CHEA) is monitoring and responding to greater demands for federal
government compliance and control, as evidenced in its recent publications (CHEA, 2011, 2013).
Third, the 2012 report from the National Advisory Committee for Institutional Quality and
Integrity (NACIQI) called for common standards for assessing academic quality across accrediting
regions (Eaton, 2012). These examples highlight concerns the federal government has about
educational quality and the possible need for greater regulation. Organizations involved in
accreditation are resisting greater regulation imposition by the federal government and are
remaining proactive in their approach to monitoring educational quality.

**RESEARCH STUDIES ON INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Four research studies conducted in the SACS region share common findings that examine
institutional effectiveness and involvement of the president, administrators, faculty, and staff (Ball,
2008; Skolits & Graybeal, 2007; Todd & Baker, 1998; Welsh et al, 2003). In their quantitative
research, Todd and Baker (1998) used a stratified random sampling of community colleges in the SACS region to determine current institutional effectiveness practices and the level of importance community college professionals place on institutional effectiveness. The reported findings show increased faculty and administrative commitment was needed for institutional effectiveness, and institutional effectiveness is more successful when it is incorporated into the institutions’ regular operating processes (Todd & Baker, 1998). Welsh et al. (2003) conducted a similar study with a sample size of 168 community colleges to ascertain faculty and administrators’ perspectives regarding the importance of institutional effectiveness. Findings from this study indicated that if the president understands the faculty’s thinking, he or she can advocate for institutional effectiveness activities and better rally participation and support for these activities. Also, the findings suggest the need for communication and collaboration within the institution, because these factors will help the faculty see the purpose of institutional effectiveness.

Skolits and Graybeal (2007) used a mixed-methods research design at one Tennessee community college in the SACS region to test the influence of institutional effectiveness processes on faculty and staff. The study proposed three research questions regarding “institutional effectiveness at the campus level, the perception of the faculty and staff regarding institutional effectiveness practices, and barriers to the institutional effectiveness experiences” (p. 302). The research findings indicated that the leader must set the tone and remain involved in the process. In addition, the faculty and staff need direction and support from the president when working on institutional effectiveness, especially in creating professional development opportunities, finding time to participate in assessment activities, and working with assessment and outcomes data.

Again in the SACS region, Ball’s (2008) research study surveyed a sample of community college chief institutional effectiveness officers (CIEO) to address (a) the role of the president in implementing of institutional effectiveness, and (b) the impact of institutional characteristics on presidential involvement in institutional effectiveness. The study concluded that while institutional characteristics were of no significance to institutional effectiveness, the president often plays a key role in its implementation. Ball (2008) asserted that presidents are often involved in institutional effectiveness. Ridguard (2014) conducted a similar study in the Middle States region and determined that from the CIEO perspective, community college presidents are almost always involved in planning institutional effectiveness efforts and are often involved in identifying, assessing, and using outcomes results for institutional improvements.

Two research studies (Boothe, 2002; Sambolin, 2010) that were conducted nationally at four-year institutions substantiated the findings that institutional effectiveness requires specific leadership. Also, institutional effectiveness must be conducted in conjunction with the strategic planning and budgetary processes. Sambolin’s (2010) findings identified prevailing presidential leadership qualities as having effective communication, sharing a common vision, and encouraging team-oriented approaches to problem-solving. Boothe’s (2002) findings surmised that administrators and educators must determine how to link assessment, strategic planning, and budgeting to enhance institutional effectiveness.

Additionally, two research studies conducted in community colleges in California further validate existing research. Gonzalez (2009) conducted a collaborative case study of four administrators. The findings of this study illuminated how administrators use data and collaboration to increase
awareness of inequitable educational outcomes and to create solutions to address institutional effectiveness. Gonzalez (2009) examined two community colleges, and her findings agree with leadership theorists in that, “The more skillful, stable, and trustworthy the leadership and the more open, flexible, data-informed, and collaborative the culture, the more integrated the processes on institutional effectiveness” (p. 233). Recommendations at the conclusion of many of the studies call for more research on this topic, particularly across accreditation regions (Skolits & Graybeal, 2007; Welsh et al., 2003).

**SCHOLAR PRACTITIONERS OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Numerous scholar practitioners actively engaged in institutional effectiveness processes shared their assessment techniques, best practices, and models for implementing institutional effectiveness. Head (2011) and Hom (2011) suggest that assessment of institutional effectiveness will not succeed without an understanding of three key principles: (a) assessment is about teaching and learning; (b) assessment is about research (data); and (c) assessment is an administrative activity. Unless administrators see their role as champions of the project, assessment activities and plans will be short-lived. Best practices dictate that leadership must extend beyond communicating the results to using the results for institutional improvements.

Volkwein (2010) proposed that any good model of institutional effectiveness should have a dual focus: one of internal inspiration for teaching and learning, and one of external pragmatism for demonstrated accountability and effectiveness. Ewell (2009) agreed and identified this duality as a tension between “assessment for accountability and assessment for improvement” (p. 5). Internal stakeholders, especially faculty, more readily engage in assessment for coursework improvements directed toward students, but they resist the need to validate the institution’s worth to outsiders. External stakeholders want data to show progress on overall institutional performance. A study conducted by Welsh et al. (2003) confirmed this finding. Leaders must be aware of this tension and attend to it in their institutional effectiveness plans.

Banta and Blaich (2011) suggested that successful assessment components are planning, implementing, improving, and sustaining—using the planning stage to define outcomes and objectives; using the next stage to conduct assessments; and lastly, implementing improvements based upon assessment results. When developing a plan, Volkwein (2010) outlined five basic questions that should guide any type of higher education assessment: “1) Are you meeting your goals? 2) Are you improving? 3) Do you meet professional standards? 4) How do you compare to others? 5) Are your efforts cost-effective?” (p. 13).

To further the comprehensive assessment plan, Manning (2011) suggested establishing an institutional effectiveness committee composed of opinion leaders from across the college. The committee reports to the president and is co-chaired by a faculty member and the institutional research officer or institutional effectiveness director, namely the chief institutional effectiveness officer, depending upon the institution’s organizational structure. The committee develops and oversees evaluative and quality processes of institutional effectiveness. Multiple sub-committees make the workload manageable by being responsible for various sub-components, such as strategic planning, academic, administrative and educational support program reviews, and student learning outcomes assessment and general education competency reviews.
Two other key factors in the institutional effectiveness process are the use of data and the integration of institutional effectiveness with planning and budget activities. Critical to any institutional effectiveness assessment is the need for reliable data for institutional research. Middaugh (2007) provided a case example in his experience at the University of Delaware. His study emphasizes gathering appropriate data, using the data in decision-making, and implementing improvements. Middaugh (2010) also stressed the importance of integrating strategic planning with assessment activities. White (2007) stated that integrating assessment activities with strategic planning increases colleges’ effectiveness of and better prepares them for their accreditation visit. Integrating these activities creates better collaboration and communication among college employees and leadership.

Nichols and Nichols (2005) offered a *how-to* process that includes institutional effectiveness, course outcomes assessment, student learning outcomes, and student services assessment. Many secondary schools, community colleges, colleges, and universities find this model useful when conducting across-the-board assessments. The model’s four steps are:

1. Establish a statement of institutional purpose
2. Identify internal objectives at various institutional levels
3. Assess if the outcomes and objectives are being accomplished
4. Adjust/improve the institution’s purpose, intended outcome, or activities based on assessment findings. (Nichols & Nichols, 2005, p. 25).

There are common themes in institutional effectiveness processes presented in the literature. First, accreditation agencies will not renew a college’s accreditation unless the school provides sufficient evidence that it engages in assessment processes and uses assessment results for institutional improvements. Second, accountability from stakeholders demands data-informed decisions and results that integrate strategic planning and budgetary processes (Middaugh, 2010). Third, best practices common to effective assessment models are:

1. Administrative support and direction
2. Involvement of all college stakeholders
3. Clear and understandable processes
4. Assessment at all levels—course, program, institutional and administrative, and educational support and student services
5. Understandable and useful data
6. Analysis of results that generate data-informed decision-making for institutional improvements (Kuh & Ikenberry, 2009; Serban, 2004; Suskie, 2009).
SUMMARY

Focus on institutional effectiveness policies and practices has increased and intensified by all associated with higher education. The purpose of the institutional effectiveness process includes the self-evaluation of an institution, based on its individual mission. Institutional effectiveness documents what is working efficiently and highlights needed improvements. Using the results of assessments and accountability performance measures to inform decision making is essential for higher education institutions and is a critical part of improving the institution, especially community colleges. More importantly, policy mandates from governments and accrediting agencies are rapidly intensifying the demand on institutional effectiveness processes to demonstrate improvements that advance student success and completion.
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The Need for Multiculturalism in the Higher Education Classroom

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ABSTRACT

Multicultural education is one of the powerful tenets that a teacher can use to teach students in the global society. Knowledge and respect for the cultures that exist within a classroom exert a wide range of effects on the students. Thus, knowledge and respect for other cultures promotes greater appreciation for individuals from different backgrounds. The greater appreciation allows the students to function well in the company of others from different races, creeds, or ethnic backgrounds. The major concerns must be that of how students’ school learning more effective in their endeavor to appreciate diversity. Multicultural education fosters positive behaviors, and it is a must within this global society; therefore, it is imperative that higher education foster and promote cultural global competency via welcoming and embracing multiculturalism into the classroom.

THE NEED FOR MULTICULTURALISM IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION CLASSROOM

As we face new students each year in our college classrooms, administrators, educational directors, and instructors must be aware that the inevitable issues of teaching multiculturalism will come up again and again. Advocates for teaching about diversity and the importance of exploring other cultures in the classroom—sometimes meet colleagues who disagree with the concept. Multicultural education is an idea, an educational reform movement, and a process (Banks, 1997). As an idea, multicultural education seeks to create equal educational opportunities for all students, including those from different racial, ethnic, and social-class groups. Multicultural education tries to create equal educational opportunities for all students by changing the total school environment so that it will reflect the diverse cultures and groups within a society and within the nation's classrooms. Multicultural education is a process because its goals are ideals that teachers and administrators should constantly strive to achieve.

Multicultural education is instruction designed for the cultures of several different races in an educational system (Banks, 2008, p. 45). This approach to teaching is based upon consensus building, respect, and fostering cultural pluralism within racial societies; Multicultural education acknowledges and incorporates positive racial idiosyncrasies into the classroom atmosphere. According to Banks (2008), he noted that Multicultural education from a global prospective allows all students to reach their potential as learners (p. 48).
One of the comments invariably heard is “culture does not belong in the classroom” (Gorski, 2007). First, classrooms do not exist in a vacuum. Every student must deal with cultural issues on a regular basis and, if he or she intends to be successful in an increasingly global community—then he or she must know how to interact with people from other cultures. Just because our region is fairly homogeneous does not mean students will not encounter people from other cultures, nor does it mean that students will not appreciate the skills for learning and living in multicultural society (Gorski, 2004, p. 68). Culture does belong in the classroom. Of course, the purpose of education is to prepare students for life outside the classroom and involve them in the process of learning globally.

Though a family’s culture is taught at home, no one should expect a student to know everything about his or her culture. Learning about ourselves is a continuous process, which occurs at all times—not just class instruction time. Finally, it is appropriate that all cultures, especially those represented in higher educational classrooms, must be taught and respected. Minority students should not be expected to give up their culture and identity to take on the culture of the teacher, nor should they be asked to relinquish their own language or put aside their own culture to develop the “civilized” notions of the world and society. In short, all students, in particular minority students must be taught to respect and cherish their own culture without feeling ashamed.

As our higher educational system continues to advance and grow, it has become increasingly evident that culture affects students as surely as textbooks and teachers. Today, technology has brought the world into our homes through television, travel, telephones and the Internet. “The information age has made the global village a reality and higher education must be structured and ready to meet the needs of the twenty-first century student” (Stearns, 2009). It’s important to stress the value of multicultural education in higher education—globally. Hence, as each new academic year begins, educators do not need to debate whether culture belongs in the college classroom; its already there.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Multicultural education is one of the most influential factors to affect higher education (Lucas, 2011). Juste (2009) posit that higher educational faculty should promote multiculturalism by global learning—meaning studying aboard (p.78). Community colleges and universities with egalitarian and democratic principles are philosophically more supportive of meeting diverse student needs and student diversity than any other type of institution in higher education (Stoll, 1995). The challenges of embracing multiculturalism are many. However, to be effective the change must be systemic, addressing the multiple facets of an institution. These factors include student recruitment and retention, hiring practices, reward systems, policies and practices, student services and activities, and curriculum development. According Heffeman and Pole (2005), both Canada and New Zealand worked to be aligned with universities in the United Kingdom by increasing the numbers of Australian universities offshore education partnerships—particularly in the Asia-Pacific region (p. 225). This alone ensured that diversity and multiculturalism was implemented via global learning.

More so, another challenge facing multicultural education is—terming of vocabulary. There are several terms that are congruous and incongruous to multiculturalism. They often include: cross-
cultural, cultural awareness, cultural diversity, cultural pluralism, cultural sensitivity, diversity, globalization, intercultural, international, pluralism, multiethnic and the list goes on. To confuse the issue further, multiculturalism is used in a variety of contexts. Multiculturalism can be an idea, concept, educational reform movement or a process for institutional change (Banks, 1997).

Another challenge of developing multicultural education is institutions have different notions about what the education looks like. Goodstein (1994) notes, “While many academics support greater emphasis on cultural diversity, there is not always agreement on what cultural diversity is or how it should be infused into the undergraduate curriculum” (p.103). Gorski (2010) asserts that Multicultural education is a progressive approach for transforming education that holistically critiques and responds to discriminatory policies and practices in education (p. 2). Also, he contends that it is firmly grounded in ideals of social justice, education equity, critical pedagogy, and a dedication to providing educational experiences in which all students reach their full potentials as learners and as socially aware and active beings, locally, nationally, and globally. Multicultural education acknowledges that schools are essential to laying the foundation for the transformation of society and the elimination of injustice. Howard (1993) stresses, “The future calls each of us to become partners in the dance of diversity, a dance in which everyone share the lead.” Multicultural learning must begin at birth and be continually nurtured through family and the efforts of higher education.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

There are several reasons why multicultural education is important in higher education. Piland and Silva (1996) posits that multicultural education is an attempt to bring social change and teach cultural sensitivity by means of globally education. Banks (1997) asserts the function of multicultural education is to enhance students’ ability to function in an increasingly diverse society and to empower them to make a difference. Gorski (2010) provide the most comprehensive argument for multicultural education. It is as follows:

To understand and appreciate the knowledge and traditions within the contemporary United States, and to understand the central role of cultural, racial and ethnic differences in the formation of our U.S. national identity; to evaluate how men and women of diverse origins have shaped their visions of self and community, and interrelationships of self and community; to consider ways various social groups within a given society participate in the culture of their society; to identify, explore and evaluate concrete examples of the students’ own cultural heritage in relationship to other heritages; and to develop the ability to read a culture through its cultural expressions and the ability to see relationships, contrasts, parallels, commonalities and interactions among various cultures (p. 443).

According Bennett (1995), he identified two different goals for multicultural education. They are variety and critical perspective. Variety is providing information about groups that may have received insufficient attention in traditional curricula. Critical perspective is directly and indirectly affecting the social climate of the institutions and the world beyond. Bennett argues that the goal of variety meets the initial needs of multicultural education, but critical perspective is necessary for long-term student, global training, institutional advancement, and social transformation.
Assessing outcomes of multicultural education is important for students, faculty, and higher institutions. A variety of outcomes including information learned, retention, and academic success have been studied in relation to development of multicultural education globally (Bennett, 1995). Students that take courses with multicultural content are reported to have learned the following: cultural artifacts, such as beliefs, values, lifestyles, symbols and rituals of cultural groups; characteristics and history of cultural groups; contributions of minorities to American society; injustices suffered by people in various cultural groups in American society and communication systems of cultural groups (Gorski, 2007). Developing multicultural education provides students with relevant examples and role models that have been overlooked in the past. Multicultural education improves retention rates, as well as academic success, student involvement, student satisfaction, and a connection between students and the college and the university (Amosa & Gorski, 2008).

CONCLUSION

Multicultural education is an essential piece in developing a comprehensive higher educational classroom within the institution and a globally educated student. However, in order for multicultural education to be effective changes in policy and hiring practices, development of appropriate curriculum, student services and activities to support students in their development is critical. Higher educational institutions (meaning community colleges and universities) have the responsibility of educating a reflective cross section of America and abroad.

Educational leaders must help to create innovative ways to incorporate a multicultural learning environment that infuses a curriculum of diversity for administrators, faculty, staff, and students. It is the creation of new ideas and solutions that, ultimately, will lead to new industries and jobs for the 21st century and beyond.
References


Why We Need Criminal Justice More Than Ever During One Of The Most Challenging Times In Our Nation’s History

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to assert the rationale for a constitutionally sound, fundamentally democratic based, and principle centered criminal justice system. Never in our nation's history has there been a need to promote justice, peace, and tranquility in America and abroad. I cannot think of any segment of society that has not been psychologically, physically, or emotionally affected by the many tragic events that has occurred in our nation over the past twenty years. Many of these events have not only changed the lives of its victims, but challenged the way our criminal justice system interprets the U.S. Constitution. Handgun violence, child abuse, domestic partner abuse, and the constant threat of both foreign and domestic terrorism are just a few important issues that the criminal justice system must attempt to manage. The United States Supreme Court, The Department of Justice, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons are in a constant state of flux when it comes to enforcing our laws at all levels of government. Local and State agencies are also being challenged when it comes to enforcing laws set forth by their legislatures.
Also, the biggest challenge that criminal justice agencies must continue to be mindful of is the interest of the American Government to protect society against people who cannot or will not subscribe to its dominant values and individual freedoms and protections set forth in the U.S. Constitution by its framers to ensure that our government is accountable to fundamental fairness in carrying out its duties no matter how complex social and crime issues have become.

Key words: Justice, Crime, Terrorism, Legislation, Policy

INTRODUCTION

The terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center in the midtown Manhattan section of New York City, the Pentagon Building in Alexandria, Virginia, and an airliner in the field of western Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001, along with the Oklahoma City bombing at the Alfred P. Murrah Building on April 19, 1995 have changed the way we view crime and criminal justice in America. No longer do terms such as mere suspicion, reasonable articulable suspicion, and probable cause apply to community or neighborhood incidents. Moreover, no longer can a beat cop be concerned with local criminals and the types of offenses that they commit.

The 21st century police officer and correctional personnel in America and throughout the world must also understand national and international political issues as they relate to economics, religion, and technology. The aforementioned phenomenology affects neighborhoods and
communities in most American cities and their surrounding counties. The implications of the new criminal justice phenomenon are many. First, the Bill of Rights has been greatly affected at all levels of government. Example, as a result of the Oklahoma City bombings, and the attacks on the World Trade Center, the U.S. Congress passed the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, that tightened the standards for habeas corpus in the United States (Doyle, 1996).

Simply put, a writ of habeas corpus demands that a prisoner be taken before the court, and that the custodian, which could be a police official, state or federal agent, etc... Present proof of authority, which allows the court to determine whether the police or agent has the lawful authority to further detain the prisoner. If the police official or agent is acting beyond their scope of authority, then the prisoner must be released. Any prisoner or detainee, or their lawyer or advocate, may petition the court, or a judge, for a writ of habeas corpus to either formally charge the person detained or release the person from custody. Often the writ is sought by a person other than the prisoner because the prisoner or detainee is held in solitary confinement (Doyle, 2006). This means that law enforcement officials, supported by state and federal courts are allowed to detain suspected terrorist for days and even months without having probable cause to formally charge a suspected terrorist with a specific crime. In other words, writs of habeas corpus are now more difficult to obtain as the government in general and the courts and correctional facilities in specific are now allowing suspects to be held under less strict legal standards. Suspects can now be held on reasonable articulable suspicion of terrorism as opposed to the tradition legal standard of probable cause.

Terrorism in our society has opened the legal door to justify detention for other local and state crimes as well. The US PATRIOT Act is probably the most controversial law that gives local, state, and federal law enforcement the authority to bypass several provisions and protections outlined in the fourth, fifth, and fourteenth amendments to the U.S. Constitution in order to prevent, disrupt, or dismantle any potential terrorist acts.

These are just a few of the federal initiatives and programs that challenge the conventional wisdom that the framers provided to ensure that the government protects its citizens while preserving the rights that it provided to individual citizens.

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE DEFINED**

There is no universal definition of criminal justice, however, there are many definitions associated depending on the scholar and from what perspective it is being defined. Sociologist often define it as an institution of social control, psychologist often defines it along behavioral terms, and lawyers assert the definition along legislative and constitutional language. However, it is defined it always deals with human behavior and how to regulate and control it. For the purpose of this paper, I will define it as an institution of social control whose primary aim is to get individuals to subscribe to the dominant values of society. The primary institutions that comprise the criminal justice system are the police, courts, and corrections. However, the criminal justice system is not the only institution that promotes social control. The others are primarily, family, faith based organizations, and school. When family, faith, and school are unable or unwilling to teach, promote, and force those dominant values, then the governments organizations such as the police, courts, and corrections will.
So given the information thus far, why do we need criminal justice more than ever? The answer is both simple and complex. The simple answer could be that crime has increased in many areas of American society and issues such as handgun violence in our schools, churches, colleges and universities are occurring at an alarming rate and the constant threat of terrorism necessitates the need for a stricter, more vigilant criminal justice system. The complex answer could be that the community, family, our social institutions such as churches, synagogues, mosque, and temples need to demand social justice in the areas of economics, education, equality, and the like.

Society also needs to hold our elected officials more accountable to respond to the challenges that we face in our communities that require a criminal justice response. There are many theoretical underpinnings that explain the phenomenology of crime in the community. Also, there are theoretical perspectives pertaining to the types of political responses to crime. Herbert Packer describes two most prominent approaches to the criminal justice process in his 1968 book, The Limits of the Criminal Sanction (Packer, 1968). Packer (1968) describes two models of the criminal justice process, crime control and due process. According to Packer (1968), due process is the rights of individuals that he asserted is politically liberal. Packer, then described crime control as the regulation of criminal conduct and behavior, a sort of assembly line justice more concerned with prosecution and incarceration for violating government sanctioned behavior, it's politically conservative (Packer, 1968).

Dworkin (1969), in his critique of Packer's book summed it up best when addressing the need for criminal sanction and criminal justice:

"Packer has said something that needed to be said. Criminal law discussion is filled with too much fuzzy talk about right and wrong with nothing more than feelings to tell people what falls into each category. Because the public thinks about criminal law, it is important that it be provided with a sensible foundation for its thought. In The Limits of the Criminal Sanction Herbert Packer has provided such a foundation. Now the rational legislators must build upon it a construct worthy of its base" (p. 498).

Another criminal justice view that is antithetical to Packer's is Restorative Justice. Interestingly, Mantle, et.al (2005), describes the concept of restorative justice and three "restorative justice seeks to include the community much more directly in the delivery of justice, with the ambition of strengthening social ties" (p. 21). Restorative justice draws from the social, communal, spiritual, and retributive ideas to mete out justice and help bring about heeling to the victims and perpetrators of the crime(s) that were committed.

CONCLUSION

There are many theories or explanations of crime and how it affects its victims and the community. Whether one subscribes to a classical theory or positive one, criminal justice is the administration of justice through penal sanction, incapacitation, banishment, and many other forms of punishment. The need for criminal justice is more prevalent than ever. American has one of the highest incarcerated populations in the world. Some major cities in the United States arrest, prosecute, and incarcerate more than 100,000 people a year. Police are generally better trained
than at any time in our nation's history with state of the art equipment, prosecutors have more resources at their disposal, and the government provides funding to build bigger and more efficient correctional facilities and prisons, yet the criminal justice system faces more challenges today than ever before.

We need criminal justice in a different way. America needs a criminal justice system that takes a holistic approach to solving or minimizing crime problems in our communities. We need more elected officials who once served as police officers; we need retired police to become school teachers. We need judges and prosecutors to become advocates for change in the way we educate our children. We need clergy to integrate community involvement in their sermons. We need to promote service as opposed to adventure. So yes, we do need criminal justice. Not justice for the criminals. We need justice for our victims. We need proactive social and political responsibility to our communities. If we do—then victims will truly get justice when they are victimized, criminals will be meted out justice, and the community will get social and political justice.
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